

We claim:

1. A method implemented by remote control device for remotely controlling functions and providing status information comprising the steps of:

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storing predetermined text based commands;

receiving a control message transmitted over a wireless communication channel;

10 parsing the control message to identify a first text based command;

comparing said first text based command with said stored predetermined text based commands to determine if the first text based command is a valid command;

15 executing a predetermined control action corresponding to said first text based command if the latter is determined to be a valid command.

2. The method according to claim 1 wherein the step of executing a predetermined control action comprises generating a control signal and transmitting the control signal to a first function controllable by the control signal.

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3. The method according to claim 1 wherein the step of executing a predetermined control action comprises generating a request for information signal, transmitting the request for information signal to an apparatus external to the remote control device, receiving first status information from the apparatus in response to said request for information signal, and transmitting a reply message containing the first status information in text based format to an address from which the control message was received.

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4. The method according to claim 1 wherein the step of receiving a control message comprises receiving a short messaging system message received over a cellular wireless communication channel.

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5. The method according to claim 1 wherein the received control message includes a first text based command and an associated first parameter where the first parameter defines a numeric value that is utilized in determining the control action to be executed.

5 6. The method according to claim 1 further comprising the step of connecting the remote control device to electronic control means in a vehicle, at least a group of said predetermined text based commands having a corresponding control action associated with an operable function of the vehicle.

10 7. The method according to claim 1 wherein the remote control device includes a means for generating location coordinates, the step of executing a predetermined control action comprising generating a request for location signal, transmitting the request for location signal to the means for generating location coordinates, receiving first location information from said means in response to said request, and transmitting a reply message containing the  
15 first location information in text based format to an address from which the control message was received.

8. The method according to claim 1 further comprising the steps of storing authentication information associated with at least one of a first user and a first user's wireless  
20 communication device, and utilizing said at least one to determine whether the received control message is valid.

9. The method according to claim 8 wherein the authentication information associated with the first user's wireless communication device comprises an electronic serial number of  
25 said device.

10. A method implemented by a cellular telephone for controlling a remote control device comprising the steps of:

storing a list of predetermined text based commands;

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displaying said list on a screen of the cellular telephone;

receiving an input from a user selecting one of the displayed commands;

10 generating and transmitting a text based control message containing the selected command, the control message containing an address of the remote control device.

11. The method according to claim 10 further comprising the steps of storing a list of addresses each corresponding to a remote control device, displaying said list of addresses on  
15 the screen of the cellular telephone, receiving a further input from the user selecting one of the displayed addresses, the one address being used as the address of the remote control device contained in the control message.

12. The method according to claim 10 wherein the step of storing further comprises  
20 storing a range of values of a parameter associated with a first command where the range of values of the parameter further defined actions associated with an implementation of the first command, displaying said range of values of the parameter on the screen of the cellular telephone following the selection of the associated first command, receiving a further input from the user selecting one value of said displayed range of values, including said one value  
25 with the selected command in the text based control message.

13. A method for remotely controlling functions and providing status information comprising the steps of:

storing predetermined text based commands in a remote control device;

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transmitting a text based control message addressed to the remote control device from a cellular telephone;

upon receipt of said control message at the remote control device, parsing the control

10 message to identify a first text based command;

determining the validity of the first command based on whether the first command is a match with any of said stored predetermined text based commands;

15 executing a predetermined control action corresponding to said first text based command by the remote control device upon the first command having been determined to be valid.

14. The method according to claim 13 wherein the step of transmitting the control message comprises transmitting a short messaging format message by the cellular telephone, and wherein the step of executing a predetermined control action comprises generating a control signal and transmitting the control signal from the remote control device to an apparatus having a first function controllable by the control signal.

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15. The method according to claim 13 wherein the step of executing a predetermined control action comprises generating a request for information signal, transmitting the request for information signal to an apparatus external to the remote control device, receiving first status information from the apparatus in response to said request for information signal, and transmitting a reply message containing the first status information in text based format to the cellular telephone based on an address of the cellular telephone received with the control message.

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16. The method according to claim 13 wherein the received control message includes a first text based command and an associated first parameter where the first parameter defines a numeric value that is utilized in determining the control action to be executed.

17. The method according to claim 13 further comprising the step of connecting the remote control device to electronic control means in a vehicle, at least a group of said predetermined text based commands having a corresponding control action associated with  
5 an operable function of the vehicle.

18. The method according to claim 13 wherein the remote control device includes a means for generating location coordinates, the step of executing a predetermined control action comprising generating a request for location signal, transmitting the request for  
10 location signal to the means for generating location coordinates, receiving first location information from said means in response to said request, and transmitting a reply message to the cellular telephone containing the first location information in text based format.

19. The method according to claim 13 further comprising the steps of storing in the  
15 remote control device authentication information associated with at least one of a first user and the cellular telephone, and utilizing said at least one to determine whether the received control message is valid.

20. The method according to claim 19 wherein the authentication information associated  
20 with the cellular telephone comprises an electronic serial number of the cellular telephone.